

Doers of the Word  
James 1:19-27

Sept. 8, 2024

INVOCATION: Merciful Lord, we are once again humbled to be called together in Your almighty presence. We rejoice that You have allowed us to gather here today. Hear the songs with which we praise You. May they be a sweet sound in Your ear. Hear our prayers as we seek to have Your will revealed to us. Help us to set aside the distractions of the world for this time and speak to us through the Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus the Messiah, Amen.

WELCOME: Be sure to welcome visitors.

HYMN # 260 Holy Bible, Book Divine  
HYMN # 261 Wonderful Words of Life

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MISSIONARY PRAYER CALENDAR

PASTORAL PRAYER:

OFFERTORY HYMN # 282 Living for Jesus

SERMON FOCUS: My response in any situation must be Christ-like.

SERMON FUNCTION: Anger is not a fruit of the Spirit.

BACKGROUND: James was written between 48-52 A.D. The author is credibly demonstrated to be the brother of Jesus who was not a believer while Jesus was alive, but had a post-resurrection encounter with the Lord. It appears that James was writing specifically to Jewish Christians throughout the world, likely to address some behaviors that were already appearing.

SCRIPTURE READING: James 1:19-27

INTRODUCTION:

Have you ever noticed that being mad can be fun? When we get caught up in being angry, it gives us a charge that gets us going. It makes us feel good to be angry, especially if we have a righteous cause. In fact, an article in Psychology Today indicates that anger can be addictive. Dr. Jean Kim writes, "What happens is that anger can lead to similar "rushes" as thrill-seeking activities where danger triggers dopamine reward receptors in the brain, or like other forms of addiction such as gambling, extreme sports, or even drugs like cocaine and methamphetamines. Anger can become its own reward, but like other addictions, the final consequences are dangerous and real, and people follow impulses in the moment without regard to the big picture." Of course, the One who designed our bodies is fully aware that we are like this and has cautioned us against anger.

Recently, manufactured outrage has become the norm. I read an interesting article from about five years ago on the Stanford Law School website called, "The Outrage-Industrial Complex." Author Richard Thompson Ford used the term "rabble-rousing for fun and profit." There are several people whose income stream is wholly based on creating outrage. Anger has become the default position of the general population now. People are looking to be offended at every turn. So, if we are to be different from the world, what must we do to avoid being caught up in all the anger around us?

MESSAGE:

1. I MUST RECEIVE CORRECTION MEEKLY

- a. (19) My dear brothers and sisters, understand this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger."
- b. Of course, James' call to be quick to listen and slow to speak is a good practice in our human relationships. But what if that's not what James is primarily speaking about here?
- c. If our immediate reaction to someone telling us something that we don't like is anger, this could easily translate into anger at God and His messengers who are sent to correct you.
- d. I once had a man start hollering at me from the pew because I made a comment about a celebrity he liked, and he wasn't having it.
- e. I know a pastor who had a member ask him where he got all his liberal talking points. His response, "The Bible."

- f. Receiving correction can be hard, but we have to do it with the right attitude. God is always right, no matter who He sends to correct us.
  - g. Several years ago, I was very angry and made a very angry social media post. A woman I know texted me to tell me how wrong I was. My immediate response: I got angry with her! Then I slowed down, realized that she was right, I was not being a good witness in the situation, and took the post down.
  - h. Everyone is occasionally wrong, and being able to receive correction humbly is essential to our faith and our growth.
  - i. Of course, as we grow and mature, we must also be able to correct others gently.
2. I MUST GIVE CORRECTION GENTLY
- a. If my initial response to everything is anger, that makes any correction that I try to do less likely to be gentle.
  - b. If it is less gentle, it is less likely to be received in the right manner.
  - c. EXAMPLE: If I saw a table of you at the Mexican Restaurant with a table full of mixed drinks and had a bad reaction...
  - d. True correction is not given in a spirit of anger, but a spirit of reconciliation.
  - e. (Matthew 18:15-17) "If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he won't listen, take one or two others with you, so that by the testimony of two or three witnesses every fact may be established. If he doesn't pay attention to them, tell the church. If he doesn't pay attention even to the church, let him be like a Gentile and a tax collector to you."
  - f. Reconciliation is always the goal, and separation is always the last resort!
  - g. Gentleness not only makes it easier for someone to receive our correction in the right spirit, but it ensures that we have the proper attitude as well. We are not in any way superior to our erroneous brother or sister.
  - h. Only God can righteously judge. We however, can gently call a person away from their sin.
  - i. Our words and tone are important, but they are not our primary means of expressing our relationship with God.
3. TRUE RELIGION IS EXPRESSED IN ACTION
- a. (27) "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world."
  - b. "Nobody knows what we're for, only what we're against when we judge the wounded." (Casting Crowns: Jesus, Friend of Sinners)
  - c. What if we were not primarily known for being outraged about \_\_\_\_\_. What if we became known for:
    - i. Loving people
    - ii. Being kind
    - iii. Being generous
  - d. Being more like Jesus than like the world around us.

- e. The truest expression of our love for Christ is not our anger at the fallen world around us; it is our care for those whom God loves.
4. THE GOSPEL IN SIMPLE FORM (adapted from Dr. James Merritt).
- a. Bad News: We are all sinners separated from God.
  - b. Worst News: There is nothing we can do about our sin problem.
  - c. Good News: Christ did for us what we cannot do for ourselves.
  - d. Best News: Salvation and eternal life are a free gift, but you must receive it.

FOUR QUESTIONS:

1. What do you hear God saying to you?
2. What keeps you from doing that?
3. If you were to do that, what might be a good first step?
4. Who are you going to tell?

INVITATION HYMN # 485 Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus